

WHAT EXACTLY IS IDENTITY THEFT ?

Identity theft is when someone uses your name, address, social security (SSN), bank or credit card account number, or other identifying information without your knowledge to open accounts, commit fraud, or other crimes.

WHAT ARE THE FIRST STEPS I SHOULD TAKE IF I'M A VICTIM OF IDENTITY THEFT?

If you are a victim of identity theft, take the following four steps as soon as possible, and keep a record with the details of your conversations and copies of correspondence.

1. Place a fraud alert on your credit reports, and review your credit reports.
2. Close the accounts that you know, or believe, have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.
3. File a report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place.
4. File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.

RESOURCES

Identity Theft Resource Center

A Nonprofit Organization

PO Box 26833, San Diego, CA 92196

(858) 693-7935, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm PT

Email us: itrc@idtheftcenter.org

(Since state laws vary, please state your city/state in correspondence)

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

CASE AGENT

(Name)

(Bureau/Office)

(Telephone Number)

(Report Number)

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR

(Name)

(Telephone Number)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information for Victims of Crime



U. S. Department of the Interior
Victim Assistance Program

1849 "C" St., NW
Mail Stop 7354
Washington, DC 20240

Phone: 1-877-246-1373

Fax: 202-208-3421

E-mail: DOI_Watch_Office@ios.doi.gov

YOUR RIGHTS AS A FEDERAL CRIME VICTIM

As a federal crime victim, you have the following rights:

- ◇ The right to be reasonably protected from the accused.
- ◇ The right to reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of any public court proceeding, or any parole proceeding, involving the crime or of any release or escape of the accused.
- ◇ The right to attend public court proceedings, unless the court, after receiving clear and convincing evidence, determines that testimony by the victim would be materially altered if the victim heard other testimony at that proceeding.
- ◇ The right to be reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, [or] sentencing, or any parole proceeding.
- ◇ The right to confer with the attorney for the government in the case.
- ◇ The right to full and timely restitution as provided in law.
- ◇ The right to proceeding free from unreasonable delay.
- ◇ The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim's dignity and privacy.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

As federal law enforcement professionals, we are concerned about the problems often experienced by victims of crime. We know that as a victim, you may experience anger, confusion, frustration or fear as a result of your experience.

We have prepared the following information to help you deal with the problems and questions that often surface during an investigation and to provide you with a better understanding of how the federal criminal justice system works. We have included a description of your rights under federal law plus information and services available to you as a federal victim. We hope that this information will be helpful and we encourage you to contact your case agent if you have any questions.

THE INVESTIGATION

Even though the days and months ahead may be difficult for you and your family, your continued assistance is required to ensure that the aims of justice are fully achieved.

During the investigation, you will be kept informed of the status of your case if you so request. Throughout the investigative process, your case agent will remain your principal contact. If you have any questions, be sure to contact him or her as soon as possible. A federal investigation can be both complex and lengthy. It may involve several organizations, some federal and some local. Remember, your interests are important to us. It is normal to have questions and we are here to help answer yours.

IF YOU ARE THREATENED OR HARASSED

If anyone threatens you or you feel that you are being harassed because of your cooperation with this investigation, contact your case agent immediately. Additional penalties have been established for harassment and other threats. The case agent is available to discuss additional protective measures with you, if necessary.

IF YOU WERE INJURED

If you do not have insurance to pay the cost of your medical bills, the Crime Victim Compensation Fund may be able to assist. If an individual is arrested and prosecuted, you may be eligible for restitution. Restitution is court-ordered payment to you as a victim of crime. It is made by the offender for any out-of-pocket expenses caused by your victimization. As a requirement of federal law, the judge will consider restitution before passing sentence.

IF PROPERTY WAS STOLEN

If your property was stolen, we hope to recover it as part of our investigation. If we do, we will notify you and make every effort to see that it is returned to you as quickly as possible. In those cases where the recovered property is needed as evidence, your property will be safeguarded and maintained in good condition until the property is released by the judicial system and it can be returned to you. Restitution may be available for property not recovered or the cost of any necessary repair.